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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 003264

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STATE FOR EUR/ERA - ROBINSON AND EUR/AGS - SAINT-ANDRE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/08/2016  
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SUBJECT: AUSTRIA ON NOVEMBER 13-14 EU FOREIGN MINISTERS  
MEETING (GAERC)

REF: STATE 183545

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Gregory E. Phillips. Reason: 1.4 (b)  
and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Charge delivered reftel points on November 7 to  
Andreas Riecken, the Austrian MFA's European Correspondent.  
¶2. (C) Riecken made the following substantive comments:

-- Western Balkans: Kosovo will be a lunch topic, and Serbia  
will be a topic during the regular meeting, Riecken said.  
Martti Ahtisaari may join the Ministers for the luncheon  
discussion of Kosovo, he added. Bosnia was not on the  
agenda, however. On Serbia, a key issue was how to address  
the relationship between resumption of talks on Serbia's  
Stabilization and Association Agreement (SAA) and the  
delivery of Ratko Mladic to the International Criminal  
Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague.  
Austria was among a group of EU member states that thought  
SAA talks could resume before Mladic is physically in custody  
in The Hague, but others took a harder line. In the end,  
Riecken said, there would probably not be much movement on  
this issue at the GAERC. Riecken added that there would  
probably be new developments on an initiative to facilitate  
visa issuance to young Serbs to visit the rest of Europe.  
This was an important element in supporting the European  
outlook of Serbian society, he said.

-- Russia: Riecken said the EU Presidency (Finland) had not  
yet specified what it intended by putting Russia on the  
agenda. Riecken speculated that this item would be a  
follow-up to recent meetings with Russian president Vladimir  
Putin, and to prepare for the upcoming EU-Russia summit.

-- Lebanon: The EU agrees with the U.S. assessment that  
Syria and Hizballah are trying to form a "blocking one-third"  
in the cabinet, Riecken said. He added that there had been  
an initiative to invite Lebanese Prime Minister Siniora to  
the GAERC meeting, but this had not been possible.

-- Iran: In addition to the nuclear issue, the EU may  
discuss the question of the Iran-EU Human Rights Dialogue,  
Riecken said.

-- Democratic Republic of the Congo: Riecken said he  
thought the DRC would be the topic of a joint meeting of  
Foreign and Defense Ministers in the context of the GAERC.  
Riecken said Austria supported termination of the military  
mission, now that the elections were over. He added that  
Austria supported the maintenance of the other EU missions,  
such as police training.

-- Uzbekistan and Cuba were not on the agenda at present,  
Riecken said.

Phillips